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ABSTRACT

In 1969 800 questionnaires were sent in four languages to governmental and non-governmental agencies dealing directly with adult literacy in 123 countries. The purpose was to receive details on methods and techniques used. Only 80 replies were received, 73 of which provided information for the study. Replies were classified in seven main categories: organization; programs (courses); methods; materials; participants; dropout; and instructors. Emphasis is laid on the aspect of dropout. The dropout rate has been discussed and analyzed according to the factors that affect it: duration of course; content of the course; responsibility for the payment for educative materials; teacher's salary; implementation of radio and television as a teaching aid; and time of the start of the project. The last part of the document is devoted to tables that contain information on the seven main categories of replies. Further statistical work will be done and interesting details will be reported in the final report. (PT)

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ADULT LITERACY METHODS
Established by Unesco and the Government of Iran

INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL POUR LES METHODES D'ALPHABETISATION DES ADULTES
Etabli par l'Unesco et le Gouvernement de l'Iran

P. O. Box 1555 Teheran Iran. Cables: Interliteracy Teheran. Tel. : 62 55 79

Ref.:

Teheran,

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ED 047245

PRELIMINARY REPORT

ON

THE REPLIES RECEIVED TO THE INSTITUTE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Issued in 1969

AC 010 040

December 1970

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE REPLIES RECEIVED TO THE INSTITUTE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

In 1969 a questionnaire was prepared to be sent to all governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing directly with adult literacy, as far as their addresses were known to the Institute. Before December 1969 about 800 questionnaires were dispatched in 4 languages to 123 countries.

Total	English	French	Spanish	Arabic
790	400	230	120	40

These figures include copies sent to all the Unesco National Commissions and to Unesco Literacy Experts, as well as various research institutes and interested individuals, which means that the number of literacy organizations approached was considerably less. The Secretaries General of the National Commissions had been requested to send the addresses of such organizations not known to the Institute, while the experts have in some cases assisted the literacy organizations in replying to the questionnaire. We should like to use this opportunity of thanking again both groups for their assistance, and particularly the persons who performed the considerable task of replying to the long questionnaire.

This questionnaire was regarded as an elaboration of some of the points mentioned in the Unesco questionnaire (EDA/70/66 Annex) dispatched on 22nd January 1969.

The purpose was to receive details on the methods and techniques used in various projects, which might be of interest to other programmes. In this way it may happen that even a small improvement will have important

consequences, particularly as one considers that literacy efforts are often undertaken on a large scale, so that the improvement or saving may be multiplied by thousands, or perhaps millions.

However, the present report would limit itself to the general findings, while we have also tried to see how far one important aspect, drop-out, may be statistically related to some particular features of the programme and its organization. This statistical work has not yet been completed, and we intend to pursue the statistical processing to see whether significant relationships can be discovered in various fields.

The present report is therefore provisional in two respects: further statistical work will have to be done, and the interesting details as reported by various projects and shown in the materials they sent, will be discussed in the final report.

It must be admitted that it has taken the Institute rather a long time even to produce this provisional report, which is to be explained by the nature of the questionnaire. In fact, it was especially conceived to invite literacy services to give details, so that a number of questions had to be open-ended which makes statistical processing complicated. Nevertheless, it was felt that a statistical summary would have a certain value, as it may serve as comparative material to see how far facts and figures differ in various countries and programmes.

However, as stated already, the discussion of the various approaches will be of more specific interest, but we thought that this "macro-treatment" of the data would already justify the publication of this provisional report.

The Institute received replies from 80 projects in 57 countries. This might seem to be a rather poor result, if compared with the 800 copies dispatched. However, it should not be forgotten that a very large number were sent to addresses , as explained above, from which no actual answer was expected. The Institute may also be blamed for sending a long questionnaire which may have deterred a number of literacy project organizers, but it seemed difficult to prepare a short questionnaire and to receive, nevertheless, the details which would be really important.

Moreover, in a number of countries complete adult illiteracy hardly exists, although the level of literacy of certain groups of the population may be too low for the socio-economic requirements. On the other hand, a new type of adult literacy is developing, particularly in a number of European countries, among immigrant workers who, barely literate or even completely illiterate in their own language, should become literate in the language of the host country. However, the questionnaire did not aim at

elucidating these problems which, moreover, are only beginning to be realized in the countries concerned.

Replies from 7 organizations in 5 countries were not included because they were not directly related to adult literacy but rather to adult education in general, or they were not sufficiently complete to be included.

The number of countries, organizations, and projects included in this study is as follows:

Areas	Countries	Organizations	Projects	Programmes
Africa	16	17	29	48
Arab States	5	5	11	15
Asia	11	26	26	29
Australia	2	2	8	8
Europe	5	5	5	5
Latin America	13	18	21	28
Total	52	73	100	133

In some countries several literacy organizations have replied e.g. India 8, Iran 6. Some organizations have several projects, e.g. the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia is sponsoring the National Literacy Project and also the Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project. Information about these two projects was given in one reply. This is the case also in some other countries. e.g. Tunisia, Cuba, Uganda, etc. In this way replies were available for 100 projects. Among these 100 projects there were many which had several programmes, e.g. the Functional Literacy Project in Tanzania provided data on 2 programmes: a Cotton Growers' Programme and a Women's Programme. The total of the programmes amounts to 133. In this study the projects have been taken as the basic unit, but not all projects have answered to all the questions.

General Findings

Replies given to the questions are classified in 7 main catagories and in 7 tables in this report. These catagories are: organization, programmes (courses), methods, materials, participants, drop-out and instructors.

Since most of the questions were open-ended, the headings in each column of the tables indicate the questions and the sub-headings are the items which were mentioned by different projects in answer to the respective questions.

The replies to many questions were not just a single answer but a combination of several answers, e.g. means to draw attention to programmes obviously were several. Another example is the places where sessions are organized. A project might have classes in different places, e.g. in schools, in mosques, or any other place. In this case the frequency of each place is given in absolute figures and in percentage of the total number of replies to that question. When to a question only one reply was possible, its frequency of having been mentioned by different projects is given in absolute figures which can also be regarded as percentages, because the total number of projects happened to be 100. (see tables1 - 7).

Drop-out

In this preliminary report, as pointed out before, emphasis is laid on the aspect of drop-out as recorded by the one hundred projects. The rate of drop-out was available for 83 projects. The distribution of drop-out is shown in tables 8 - 14, under the statistical results.

Reasons given for drop-out obviously varied, and usually more than one reason was given by each project. Seventy-four projects have given various reasons. One case (General Labour Federation in France) indicated no drop-out and therefore no reason was given, and 25 projects did not give any answer. The variety of reasons for drop-out and their frequency is as follows:

Combination	Frequency	Total of reasons
One reason	24	24
Two reasons	16	32
Three reasons	21	63
Four reasons	9	36
Five reasons	4	20
Total	74	175

Variety of reasons for drop-out and their frequencies

1. Seasonal work
2. Travel and change of place
3. Work problems
4. Bad organization
5. No qualified personnel
6. Shortage of materials
7. Student's low calibre
8. Shyness and other psychological reasons
9. Household reasons
10. Illness
11. Others

As it is seen the peek is for the students' low calibre, which may mean, however, that the programmes were not well adjusted to the participants.

In the questionnaire it was also asked whether drop-outs planned to repeat the course or not, and replies were received from 60 projects as follows:

Drop-outs joining the next course

	Often	Seldom	Do not join	Total
Frequency	21	33	6	60
Percentage	35	55	10	100

It may be noteworthy that two thirds of the respondents have stated that drop-outs would "seldom" or "not" join the next course. This again may be an indication that participants felt that the programmes were not interesting enough to make a real sacrifice in time and effort.

STATISTICAL RESULTS

The rate of drop-out is obviously affected by many factors. In this study the possibility of a relationship between the rate of drop-out and the following variables have been tested. (*)

a) Duration of the course;

b) Content of the course;

c) Students paying for educative materials or not;

d) Teachers being paid or not;

e) Implementation of radio and T.V. as a teaching aid;

f) Time of the start of the project.

a. The first text concerned the possibility of a relationship between the duration of the course and the rate of drop-out. Sixty-nine projects answered to these questions. The duration of the course is expressed in terms of hours and the median for duration for all projects was 300 hours. The distribution of frequencies is shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Rate of Drop-out and the Duration of the Course

Drop-out \ Duration	300 hours or less	301 hours or more	Total
0 - 17%	6	9	15
18 - 33%	13	9	22
34 - 60%	14	14	28
61 - 80%	2	2	4
	35	34	69

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 1.312
C = 0.134
A.M.<300 hours = 33.96%
A.M.>301 hours = 32.71%

(*) The X^2 test and coefficient of contingency was used, while the arithmetical means (A.M.) have also been computed. Dr. M. Bazany and Dr. J. Kaufmann, Unesco evaluation experts, helped the Institute in this statistical part of the study. We should like to thank them sincerely for their valuable cooperation.

The calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, statistically a relationship between these two variables is rejected. By looking at the respective arithmetical means (A.M.) one can also see that there is practically no difference in the rate of drop-out in projects shorter than 300 hours and longer than 300 hours. This finding is interesting, since it is often maintained that short courses would show a low rate of drop-out.

b. Rate of drop-out and the content of the course. Out of 82 cases having answered to both questions (drop-out and the kind of content), 23 projects had a technical content and 59 had no special content. The distribution of these two variables is shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Rate of Drop-out and Content of the Course

Drop-out \ Content	Technical content	No special content	Total
0 - 17%	6	14	20
18 - 33%	6	17	23
34 - 60%	9	26	35
60 - 80%	2	2	4
	23	59	82

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 1.129
C = 0.119
A.M., Technical content = 33.58%
A.M., No special content = 32.69%

On the basis of the obtained X^2 and the application of co-efficient of contingency, the relationship between the type of content and the rate of drop-out is statistically insignificant. By looking at the respective arithmetical means no tendency can be found either. Although the number of cases with a technical content is relatively small, so that it may not be justified to draw any definite conclusions, it would appear that providing a technical content as such, is no guarantee for a low rate of drop-out. It is possible, however, that the type and quality of the content would be more important than the fact that there is a technical content.

c. Rate of drop-out and paying or not paying for materials. Some projects provide students with free educative materials and some do not. Answers to both questions (rate of drop-out and paying or not paying for materials) were given in 81 cases, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10.

Rate of Drop-out and Paying or not Paying for Materials

Drop-out \ Material	Free	Paid	Total
0 - 17%	7	12	19
18 - 33%	16	7	23
34 - 60%	20	14	34
61 - 80%	3	2	5
	46	35	81

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 4.682
C = 0.232
A.M. (free) = 35.41%
A.M. (paid) = 33.05%

The calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, statistically no significant relation exists between these two factors. But by looking at the distribution of frequencies and the arithmetical means one can see that the rate of drop-out is somewhat more in projects in which students do not pay for the educative materials. This difference is not impressive, but it is interesting to note that on 35 cases there are more than one-third showing a very low rate of drop-out (less than 17%) when people have to pay for the materials they use, while it is less than one-sixth (7 on 46 cases), when the materials are free. This might be an indication that there is something to be said for charging a small amount for the materials, although a firm conclusion is not justified.

d. Rate of drop-out and teachers being paid or not. Certain projects do not pay teachers and some do. The possibility of any relationship between this factor and the rate of drop-out is tested and frequencies are shown in Table 11. Seventy-three projects answered to these questions.

Table 11

Rate of Drop-out and Teachers' Salary

Drop-out \ Teachers' Salary	Not paid	Paid	Total
0 - 17%	4	15	19
18 - 33%	5	16	21
34 - 60%	5	23	28
61 - 80%	2	3	5
	16	57	73

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 1.273
C = 0.130
A.M., (not paid) = 35.82%
A.M., (paid) = 33.19%

The value of the X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability and no definite relationship between these two variables can be expected. By looking at the respective arithmetic means it is seen that the rate of drop-out is a little more for unpaid teachers, and we might say that there is perhaps a slight tendency to have less drop-outs when teachers are paid. However, the number of cases of teachers who are not paid is 16 only, and it is not justified to draw any conclusion.

c. Drop-out and radio and T.V. - Radio or T.V., or both in some projects are indicated to be either as a means of instruction or as a support to the teacher. Eighty projects replied to both questions (rate of drop-out and use of radio and/or T.V.). The distribution is shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Rate of Drop-out and the Use of Radio and/or T.V.

Drop-out \ Radio & T.V.	Yes	No	Total
0 - 17%	6	14	20
18 - 33%	9	13	22
34 - 60%	11	23	34
61 - 80%	3	1	4
	29	51	80

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 3.362
C = 0.200
A.M., Yes = 34.95%
A,M., No = 29.68%

The value for the calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, no statistically significant relationship between the rate of drop-out and the use of radio and/or T.V. is expected. However, by looking at the arithmetical means, we see that there is a higher rate of drop-out in projects where radio and/or T.V. was used, (34.95%), and less when radio and T.V. was not used (29.68%). Therefore, it might be concluded that there is a slight tendency to have more drop-outs when radio and T.V. are used.

It is difficult to give a satisfactory explanation, since one would expect that the usually better quality of teaching via radio or T.V. and the interest of using a special means of communication, would rather attract the participants in a course. It may be, however, that the lack of personal contact and the often lower quality of the monitors would be stronger negative factors. However, as we are statistically not on a firm base, it is not justified to draw any definite conclusion.

f. Rate of drop-out and time of the start of the projects. The oldest programme answered to the replies was started in 1940 and the most recent ones were the ones started in 1969. In testing the time of the start with the rate of drop-out, the time of the start was divided into four categories (1940-50, 50-60, 60-64, 65-69). The distribution of frequencies of these categories in regard to the rate of drop-out is shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Rate of Drop-out and the Time of the Start of the Programme

Drop-out \ Year started	1940-50	51-60	61-64	65-69	Total
0 - 17%	1	1	2	12	16
18 - 33%	4	5	5	9	23
34 - 60%	3	7	12	9	31
61 - 80%	0	0	3	1	4
	8	13	22	31	74

d.f. = 9
X^2 = 5.683
C = 0.258
A.M., 40 - 50 = 31.62%
A.M., 51 - 60 = 36.03%
A.M., 61 - 64 = 42.09%
A.M., 65 - 69 = 25.79%

The value of the calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, no statistically significant relationship does exist between the rate of the drop-out and the time of starting the programme. However, by looking at the respective arithmetical means of each category, we see that the lowest rate of drop-out is for the last category (projects started in '65-'69) while the highest rate of drop-out is found in the third category (programmes started in 1961-64).

Because the number of the projects in the first two categories is small, and, moreover, it corresponds approximately with the median percentage, we have tried to see if any significant relationship exists for programmes in the last two categories. The X^2 is calculated in a two

by two table, putting together the projects having a drop-out of less or more than 33%. The number of projects started in 1961-69 is fifty-three. Their distribution in regard to the rate of drop-out and the time they started is shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Rate of Drop-out and Time of the Start of the Project

Drop-out \ Year started	1961-64	65-69	Total
0 - 33%	7	21	28
34 - 80%	15	10	25
	22	31	53

d.f. = 1
X^2 = 6.10
C = 0.332
A.M. (61-64) = 42.09%
A.M. (65-69) = 25.79%

The value of the X^2 is significant at the 0.02 level of probability, as $X^2 > 5.412$, but $X^2 < 6.635$ which would provide a probability at the 0.01 level. Therefore, in this case we can conclude that the newer projects tend to have less drop-out. This conclusion is also confirmed by looking at the arithmetical means: the rate of drop-out is lower for projects started in 1965-69.

It is interesting to note that the newest projects are clearly more attractive than the somewhat older ones (which show a larger drop-out than the median). At present it is difficult to explain why the 22 projects, established between 1961 and 1964 are particularly weak, but the better quality of the newly established projects would seem to indicate that in the last 5 years there has grown a greater awareness among the programme organizers about the actual needs of the illiterates, so that they are less likely to abandon a course.

TABLE 1. ORGANIZATION

	%					
Type of Project		73	governmental			
		22	non governmental			
		5	semi governmental			
Year started		9	1940-50			
		15	1950-60			
		63	1960-70			
		13	no answer			
Cooperation	yes	Source	43.88	79	pub. org.	
			20.55	37	private org.	
			20	36	U.N. & agencies	
			3.89	7	others	
			11.67	21	no answer	
		Kind		38	technical	
				2	financial	
				42	both	
				18	no answer	
				3	no co-operation	
Programme discontinued last 5 years	yes	reason		9	technical	
				4	financial	
				3	both	
				72	not discontinued	
				12	no answer	
Difficulties in preparing the programme			19.18	33	financial	
			25.55	44	personnel	
			21.51	37	organization	
			12.77	22	material	
			9.88	17	lack of st's interest	
			3.49	6	others	
			4.65	8	no difficulty	
			2.91	5	no answer	
Means to draw attention at beginning			39.25	84	speeches	
			16.35	35	films	
			25.70	55	broadcasts	
			2.80	6	political motivation	
			13.55	29	newspaper	
			2.35	5	no answer	
Plans for change				13	permanent adaptation	
				22	to functional	
				17	others	
				12	no plan for change	
				36	no answer	
Studies & evaluation made about literacy				51	yes	
				20	no	
				29	no answer	

TABLE 2. PROGRAMME (COURSE)

%				
	24 59 14 3	special content no special content both primary school content	Content of the course	
58.46 23.85 16.15 1.54	76 31 21 2	national vernacular foreign no answer	Language used in the course — Type	
	8 74 18	yes no no answer	Language used in the course — Lang. Problem	
	47 38 15	300 hours and less 301 hours and over no answer	Duration of the course	
14.52 1.70 3.98 13.67 26.49 2.56 16.25 4.27 14.54	17 2 7 16 31 3 19 5 17	no level system 1st elementary 2nd " " 3rd " " 4th " " 5th " " primary certificate higher " no answer	Level attained at the end of full course	
	85 2 13	yes no no answer	Exam.	
	76 7 17	yes no no answer	Certi-ficate	
35.65 26.76 10.65 10.- 8.43 2.27 6.21	64 48 19 18 15 5 11	schools community hall factory mosque-church homes open air no answer	Places where sessions are organized	
	15 53 32	yes no no answer	Classes during working hours	
	24 13 63	yes no no answer	Employer offering facili-ties	
22.88 11.43 12.38 20.44 11.43 20.44	24 12 13 22 12 22	higher level reading groups vocational training classes organized by others no follow-up no answer	Follow-up course	

TABLE 3. METHODS

						Special techniques
Teaching method	Method prepared for adults	Experiment before adopting the method	Previous study to select content	Base for the selection of vocabulary	Means	Purpose of using Radio and/or T.V.
%						
16	18	synthetic				
28	30	analytic (global)				
41.5	48	eclectic (mixed)				
7	8	laubach				
1.20	2	key word				
.87	1	no special method				
	4	no answer				
	77	yes				
	15	no				
	8	no answer				
	65	yes				
	20	no				
	15	no answer				
	48	yes				
	16	no				
	36	no answer				
22.72	30	linguistic				
34.84	46	daily use				
31.81	42	technical				
2.27	3	others				
8.33	11	no answer				
25.00	63	radio				
8.73	22	T.V.				
14.28	36	films				
13.09	33	slides				
8.73	22	tape recorder				
9.12	23	flannel boards				
17.46	44	charts				
1.19	3	no special techn.				
2.38	6	no answer				
54.10	45	propaganda				
2.35	2	teachers training				
10.6	9	full course				
* 20	17	help to course				
2.35	2	follow-up				
10.6	9	no answer				

*The percentages for this column are calculated on the basis of the 85 cases where radio and/or T.V. were said to be used. (See previous column).

TABLE 4. MATERIALS

Subject of the reading materials and primers	Arithmetic	Follow-up material	Cost of material	Materials produced by	Libraries in villages	Incentive in Environment
%						
23.26	57					
13.87	34					
7.75	19					
17.55	43					
15.52	38					
6.13	15					
15.92	39					
	41	adopted for adults				
	34	primary school				
	3	no arithmetic				
	22	no answer				
	49		yes			
	3		no			
	48		no answer			
	47			free		
	40			paid		
	13			no answer		
	74				project	
	14				others	
	5				both	
	7				no answer	
	37					yes
	50					no
	13					no answer
	65					yes
	30					no
	5					no answer

TABLE 5. PARTICIPANTS

Participants	professional groups	29	18.12
	urban	18	11.20
	rural	35	21.87
	whole nation	25	15.62
	women	26	16.25
	semi-literates	9	5.52
	others	10	6.25
	no answer	8	5.-
Classification of students by	sex	32	21.33
	level	42	28.-
	age	19	12.67
	interest	29	19.33
	heterogeneous	15	10.-
	no answer	13	8.67
Average no. of participants in each class	5-10	11	
	11-20	22	
	21-30	34	
	over 30	5	
	the number varies	5	
	no answer	23	
Reasons for joining the course	literacy	51	29.82
	economic	38	22.22
	social prestige	51	29.82
	religious	7	4.04
	compulsary	1	0.59
	no answer	23	13.45
Students paying for the course	yes	6	
	no	73	
	no answer	21	

Table 6. Drop-outs

%			
	20	0-17	Rate of drop-out %
	23	18-33	
	34	34-60	
	5	61-80	
	7	no data	
	11	no answer	
9.-	18	seasonal work	Reasons for drop-out
15.-	30	travel & change of place	
12.-	24	work problem	
7.-	14	bad organization	
8.-	16	no qualified personnel	
3.5	7	shortage of material	
17.-	34	students' low calibre	
4,-	8	shyness & other psycho. reasons	
6.-	12	household responsibility	
3.5	7	illness	
2.5	5	others	
12.5	25	no answer	
	21	often	Drop-outs joining next course
	33	seldom	
	6	never	
	40	no answer	
5.74	7	good teaching	Incentives to complete course
15.58	19	advice	
5.74	7	offering goods	
38.52	47	certificates	
8.20	10	follow-up course	
9.83	12	other rewards	
16.39	20	no answer	

TABLE 7. INSTRUCTORS

%			
40.26	60	school teachers	Selection of instructors
10.05	9	technicians	
16.10	24	students	
15.43	23	volunteers	
6.04	9	military personnel	
1.34	2	missionaries	
6.71	10	others	
4.02	6	no answer	
34.89	67	special training	Training
25.00	48	teachers' meetings	
26.56	51	teachers' manual	
8	16	in-service training	
5.21	10	no answer	
12	15	psychology of adults	Content of training
31.70	39	methods of teaching	
8.13	10	practical training	
4	5	use of A.V. aids	
43.90	54	no answer	
	35	school teachers	Instructors are considered by partic. as
	25	discussion leader	
	29	both	
	11	no answer	
45.73	59	salary paid	Instructors' reward
3.00	4	awards	
27.12	35	certificate	
12.40	16	not paid	
11.50	15	not answered	
48.78	60	inspectors	System of inspection
26.83	33	supervisors	
13.00	16	teachers' report	
4.75	6	nothing	
6.50	8	no answer	

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